Mr. K. Shahul Hameed: May I know how the eligibility is determined?

Mr. H. C. Papworth: Under Section 10, Chapter V, of the Statutes of the University, powers are vested in the Vice-Chancellor to promulgate rules for eligibility.

Officers and staff of the Secretariat.

118. *Mr. Paul A. Thaliath: Will the Government be pleased to place on the table a statement showing the number and caste (with sub-divisions) of the officers and staff of the Secretariat?

Rajyasevapravina G. Parameswaran Pillai: The time and labour involved in collecting the required information are out of proportion to its possible utility.

Mr. Paul A. Thaliath: May I know if the honourable member is aware of a statement made by the Chair that caste-war statements would not be furnished during the control period?

Rajyasevapravina G. Parameswaran Pillai: I am aware of the statement made by the Chair.

Mr. Paul A. Thaliath: May I know if the present answer is not in conflict with that statement?

Rajyasevapravina G. Parameswaran Pillai: No Sir, it is not.

HIGH PRICES OF CONTROLLED ARTICLES.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: Sir, I wish to bring to the notice of the Government certain important matters over which immediate action of Government is necessary.

Mr. G. Revi Varma: Sir, the member has changed his seat.

President: You must have seen that a number of members have changed their seats.

Mr. G. Revi Varma: But we have not been informed of it.

President: Why should the honourable members be informed of it? Any honourable member can make up his mind and join any party and inform the Secretary. And the Secretary will allot the seat accordingly.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: We experience very great difficulty and loss in getting controlled articles. Even in Trivandrum, under the very nose of the Government, we are not able to get them at the controlled prices. Much more is the difficulty in rural parts. Sir the reasons are obvious. The control is most ineffective and inefficient. Secondly the people do not know what the controlled articles are and what their respective prices are. Even the merchants in

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rural parts and even in towns do not know the details as mentioned above and pay a higher value for controlled goods due to ignorance. The people purchase them paying a higher price than the controlled prices thinking what they paid is the real price. Sir, even though the prices are controlled for onions and potatoes, chillies and paddy, we had to pay annas four for a pound of onion, annas twelve for a pound of potatoes and chillies during Onam. Price of tobacco is still Rs. 5 a pound in spite of control. If any consumer goes for controlled articles to the merchants, the latter will say that he has no stock in case he does not get a higher price. It is therefore I said that the control is ineffective and inefficient. The Government have provided 9 lakhs of rupees for control. If this is the sort of control exercised, it is better to free the people from the control.

Sir, the Government can minimise the difficulties if they choose. A list of all the controlled articles with their prices may be published in all the Malayalam dailies of the State, so that all may know it. Secondly, the merchants may be directed to put up boards in front of their shops wherein the names of the controlled articles with prices they sell, are written. Violation of this direction may be made penal. Thirdly, a few non-official honorary C. I. Ds', in every taluk may be appointed without disclosing their identity authorising them to inspect any shop and make reports. Their names shall be known only to the Chief Secretary. They may be given authorisation with the seal of the Government to show to any merchant who protests against inspection. The very announcement of the above appointment, even if no appointment is made, will instil fear in merchants and they will desist from extracting higher prices. I pray that the Government may take immediate action on the matters suggested.

President: Government have given very strict instructions that in any case where there is either hoarding or profiteering going on and price charged over and above the controlled price, prosecutions should not only be strict but, as far as possible, very deterrent sentences should be imposed—fines up to Rs. 1,000 and three year's rigorous imprisonment. Honourable members might have known that 9,000 cases have been dealt with in Bengal and 3,000 cases in Bombay and it is found that all over India there is no difficulty in people coming forward with complaints. At one time there was reluctance on the part of honourable members of the legislature and the public to come forward with allegations.

The policy of the Government is perfectly clear. If a single trader, however important or influential he may be, sells any article above the controlled price on complaint of refusal to give receipt or bill, not only will action be taken against him but Government have also instructed all the Government Pleaders to press in all such

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[President]

cases for imprisonment and fine not less than Rs. 1,000 in each case. Honourable members may rest assured that every complaint that is brought forward will be treated as of the utmost importance. As a matter of fact we are suffering by reason of the policy pursued by the public in Travancore because practically every two or three days this Government is getting reminders from the Government of India asking for returns of the number of persons imprisoned and the number of persons against whom heavy fines have been levied and asking for explanations why so few people have been imprisoned and why on so few people have fines been imposed. In British India they are proceeding on a very elaborate basis in this matter. We have appointed a Special Officer for this matter. I am making an appeal to every person when he is asked for a higher price than that which is known as the controlled price, at once to complain. Within 15 minutes of the complaint the man will be proceeded against and bail will be opposed. Government have instructed the Government Pleaders to oppose bail applications and to insist on imprisonment and very heavy fine. I wish everybody in the State should be made aware of it so that the public at large might be encouraged to bring forward complaints. I may say that the success of the scheme will, to a very large extent, depend upon that. Unless there are a large number of prosecutions and offences brought to light, it will be difficult to get articles at controlled prices. Otherwise the Government of India will think that we are not very earnest about the prevention of hoarding and profiteering. I may say that to get articles at controlled prices it is essential to detect cases of the following type. First of all in regard to every person who does not give a receipt, his name will have to be sent up. Secondly every person who has got controlled articles but does not sell them, his name will have to be sent up. Then every person who does not give a receipt for the articles sold, his name will have to be sent up. Government are absolutely bent upon it and they have given the undertaking to the Government of India that in no case will they refrain from prosecution.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: There is the further difficulty. Most of the people do not know what are the articles that are controlled and the prices for them.

President: They have been published from time to time and I am perfectly prepared to republish the whole list in Malayalam so that they may be known to the people at large.

Mr. N. Narayana Kurup: The list may be given to the Malayalam Dailies.

Mr. T. M. Chidambarathanu Pillai (*Tovala* cum *Agastiswaram*): Sir, they may be published in Tamil also.

President: Yes.

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Rajyasevapravina G. Parameswaran Pillai: Sir, I may inform the honourable House that 52 cases have been detected and action taken during the last week.

President: We are severely handicapped in this matter. The same trouble arose in Madras. In cases where particular shopkeepers kept inaccurate accounts or did not give proper receipts or did not supply controlled articles, people were nervous of starting the elaborate process of going to the courts, giving evidence and all that. Now all that shyness has been conquered in British India. Why not that be done here also?

DEMANDS FOR GRANTS—(*contd.*)

DEMAND XV—STATE TRANSPORT—(*contd.*)

Mr. K. A. Raman Pillai (*Municipal Councils*): Sir, I was pointing out the other day the necessity for issuing through tickets from Trivandrum to Kottayam in ordinary buses also. Now, tickets in ordinary buses are issued only as far as Kottarakara and it will be only after a terrible ordeal and with very great physical exhaustion that the passengers will be able to gain admission into the bus either at Trivandrum or at Kottayam. Nobody will contend for the position that the journey in the buses is comfortable in these days of overloading and over-crowding, so that by the time these passengers reach Kottarakara they will be completely worn out. By the time the buses reach Kottarakara there will be a huge gathering waiting for the bus there and the unfortunate old passengers will be asked to get down at Kottarakara and they will have to enter into a fight with the newcomers who wait at the Kottarakara bus-stand. In the tussle that takes place it is quite possible that the new comers will get the better of the old passengers and some of the old passengers are likely to be stranded at Kottarakara. In some cases their purse may not also permit them to remain at Kottarakara for one day especially in these days of food scarcity. It will be a source of great hardship to those passengers. So I invite the attention of the department to the necessity of issuing through tickets from Trivandrum to Kottayam and *vice versa*.

Another point which I wish to bring to the notice of the Government is about the tarpaulin, that is, the water proof cloth intended to protect the luggage from the onslaughts of the rain. I do not know why most of these buses are not provided with tarpaulin. The luggage will be thrown over to the top of the buses and it will be exposed to rain. When the passenger gets down he will get a bundle of wet things and his bedding will certainly form part of the luggage. That will be soaked in water and he will be forced to use the wet bedding which will tell upon his health. It is therefore necessary that attention should be bestowed upon this matter also.

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